

**Green Schools Recognition Program  
2014-2015 Application**

**PART A: COVER SHEET**

School Name: MECE Preschool and Kindergarten  
School Grade Levels: age 2-Kindergarten Total Student Enrollment: 122  
School Address: 625 NE Mizner Blvd.  
City: Boca Raton State: FL Zip: 33432  
Name of Contact Person 1: Cathy Herschelman email: meceink@aol.com  
Name of Contact Person 2: Lisa Bariso email: meceink@aol.com

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

Pine Jog Environmental Education Center has permission to use our photographs for promotional purposes. We understand that Pine Jog Environmental Education Center will not identify any individual student.

Director's Signature Cathy Herschelman Date 2-6-15  
Assistant Director's Signature Lisa Bariso Date 2-6-15  
Lead Teacher #1 Signature Sharon Bardos Date 2/6/15  
Lead Teacher #2 Signature Karen Tringali Date 2/6/15  
Parent Association President's Signature Diane Rabb Date 2/6/15

**Green Team:**

<u>Name:</u>	<u>Position/Title:</u>
Cathy Herschelman	Director
Lisa Bariso	Assistant Director
Sharon Bardos	Marvelous Monday's Teacher
Karen Tringali	Kindergarten Teacher
Diane Rabb	Parent Association President

**PART B: SUMMARY OF GREEN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

At MECE Preschool and Kindergarten we have always been very proud of our efforts to recycle, and teach children the importance of taking care of planet Earth. The process of applying for this Green School of Recognition has raised our awareness in so many areas. We have always had very beautiful schools grounds and each year we maintain a nice supply of milkweed plants so that we attract caterpillars. We have been able to observe the butterfly's

metamorphosis first hand. This year we further enhanced our campus by adding a garden where the children can taste fresh vegetables.

We make every effort to have a **sustainable school**. Our Kindergarten students did a presentation explaining how we could conserve electricity by turning off the lights when leaving a room. We have always tried to dissuade our families from using so much disposable lunch and snack items, this year we had Tupperware lunch box items for sale at “Meet the Teacher” day. We are concerned and vigilant about good health year round, so we like to have a Nurse day, so an expert can remind the kids to wash their hands, cover their coughs, and eat healthy food. Recycling is just second nature at MECE. We recycle paper, and plastic off course but we also recycle our toner cartridges and our markers at the end of the year. This year when we needed a new picnic table we were excited to purchase one made of recycled plastic. We have always encouraged our families to carpool if possible. This year we are having a walk/bike or share a ride day to see if we can reduce the number of cars coming through the carline. We try to conserve water by collecting our leftover water from snack to water our plants. The concept of conservation is **interwoven in our curriculum**. Our Kindergarten class does a unit on the ecology and geography of the state of Florida. Through hands on visits with animals from the Underground Reptile to nature walks on our beautiful campus, we learn about the environment. Our student also enjoy field trips to local nature centers, and Butterfly World to learn about coexisting in our delicate ecosystem.

We are fortunate to have many **partnerships both within the school and the community**. Our Parent Association offers many fundraising opportunities for us that double as a way to raise awareness of many green or organic products. We like to give back to our community by collecting clothing and toys that we no longer use, thus giving these items a second home. We also partner with outside vendors like SWA and High Touch High Tech to educate the students and staff about recycling and taking care of the planet.

As the Director I would like to say that the ideas of conservation start from the top, but in reality everyone on the MECE staff has had some suggestions of improvements we can make. This creates an environment of shared goals, and helps make the goals more achievable because they are important to everyone. This is our school’s philosophy. All staff members are expected to take 24 hours of professional development each year. Several staff members chose to take classes on gardening, composting, taking care of planet earth, etc. The **administrative staff support**, and facility each of the projects that we, as a school select. We also are very quick to brag about our accomplishments on Facebook and on our own website [www.meceboca.org](http://www.meceboca.org).

We have been trying to encourage the families to send food items to school in reusable containers. Not only is it better for the environment, we believe families can save money, and feed their children healthier foods by planning ahead instead of just grabbing a few prepackaged snacks. Our **innovative idea** this year is to host a “No trash” snack and lunch day. Students will receive prizes if they are able to pack a trash-free snack and lunch.

MECE is very proud to apply to be a Green School of Recognition. This program would not have been possible without the support of all of my Green Team members which help brainstorm ideas to try. This program helped raise our overall awareness of the impact we have on our environment and hopefully encouraged some families to make some changes at home as well.

## **PART C: NARRATIVE SUMMARY AND DOCUMENTATION**